

El Sol Brillante Community Garden

6/12/17

Lois Cremmins, Executive Director of the Greenacre Foundation

I am writing on behalf of El Sol Brillante Community Garden to urge you to ensure that the Midtown East Rezoning does not adversely affect Greenacre Park on East 51th Street.

Our organization's mission is to thrive and succeed as a garden and community center for our neighborhood. We have educational compost classes and herb walks, Bar B Qs and pot luck meals, tie-dye T-shirt workshops, concerts and movie nights.

Regrettably, the current rezoning plan would significantly reduce the amount of sunlight reaching the park.

Developed in 1971 for public use, Greenacre Park is maintained with private funds through the generosity of the Greenacre Foundation. The vest pocket park attracts residents, families, tourists, and members of the local workforce.

Tall buildings now cast shadows on the park for two to three hours daily. Left unmodified, the rezoning would lead to even taller buildings that would double the amount of shadow darkening the park.

The darkened park would forever diminish visitors' enjoyment – and threaten its beautiful vegetation. The park's extraordinary landscaping is already at its minimum requirements for sunlight hours.

The park is the only green space of its kind in the rezoning study area. According to New Yorkers For Parks, park space is very rare in City Council District 4, with only two percent of its acreage dedicated to parkland – versus a citywide council district average of 19 percent.

The Municipal Art Society has said that the City "cannot afford to allow development under the East Midtown proposal to cast such an important resource as Greenacre Park in additional shadow."

Developed and maintained by the Greenacre Foundation, which was founded by Abby Rockefeller Mauzé, Greenacre Park has won awards for its concept and design from such organizations as The Parks Council of New York City, The New York Society of Architects, and The New York State Association of Architects.

A modified rezoning plan would improve midtown Manhattan while also preserving Greenacre Park's scarce sunlight. We urge you to implement a modified rezoning plan that would maintain the character and appeal of this popular and essential open space.

El Sol Brillante Community Garden is also maintained with private funds and the generosity of the Greenacre Foundation. We believe our mission like Greenacre Parks mission is very important in being a beautiful open green space for people of all walks of life to gather and enjoy everything we have to offer. We are more than happy to give our support to Greenacre Park.

Sincerely,

El Sol Brillante Community Garden

Max Katz, President

527 East 12 St apt F6

New York NY 10009

Cc: Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Daniel R. Garodnick, New York City Council Member
The Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor of New York City